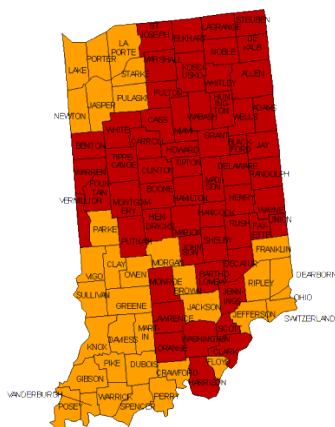


Indiana State Department of Health
Indiana Lead & Healthy Homes Program
INDIANA RADON HOTLINE = 1-800-272-9723

RADON FACT SHEET

- Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths in the U.S. for non-smokers. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer deaths in the U.S. for smokers.
- Radon is estimated to cause twenty thousand (20,000) radon-related deaths from lung cancer each year in the U.S. (EPA estimate).
- The risk of lung cancer from radon exposure is 10-20% greater for smokers as for non-smokers.
- Radon is a naturally-occurring, radio-active gas that is found in the soil and it is colorless, odorless and tasteless.
- Nearly 1 out of every 15 homes in the U.S. is estimated to have hazardous radon levels (greater than 4.0 picocuries per liter (pCi/L)).



Red = High potential for hazardous radon levels.

Orange = Moderate potential for hazardous radon levels.

- Testing is inexpensive and easy – it should only take a few minutes of your time.
- The average indoor radon level is estimated to be about 1.3 pCi/L, and the average outdoor radon level is estimated to be about 0.4 pCi/L. Most homes today *can* be reduced to 2 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) or below with a radon mitigation system installed in the home.
- Lowering high radon levels requires technical knowledge and special skills. You should use an Indiana-licensed, contractor who is trained to fix radon problems. A qualified contractor can study the radon problem in your home and help you pick the right treatment method.
- **1-800-SOS-RADON (1-800-767-7236)**
National Radon Hotline Purchase radon test kits by phone.
- **1-800-55RADON (1-800-557-2366)**
National Radon Helpline Get live help for your radon questions.
- **1-800-426-4791**
Safe Drinking Water Hotline, operated under contract to EPA. For information on testing, treatment, radon in water, and drinking water standards.

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Radon Myths

MYTH: Scientists are not sure that radon really is a problem. **FACT:** Although some scientists dispute the precise number of deaths due to radon, all the major health organizations (like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Lung Association and the American Medical Association) agree with estimates that radon causes thousands of preventable lung cancer deaths every year. This is especially true among smokers, since the risk to smokers is much greater than to non-smokers.

MYTH: Radon testing is difficult, time-consuming and expensive. **FACT:** Radon testing is easy. You can test your home yourself or hire a qualified radon test company. Either approach takes only a small amount of time and effort.

MYTH: Homes with radon problems can't be fixed. **FACT:** There are simple solutions to radon problems in homes. Hundreds of thousands of homeowners have already fixed radon problems in their homes. Most homes can be fixed for about the same cost as other common home repairs; check with one or more qualified mitigators. Call your Indiana State radon office at 317.233.1250 for help in identifying qualified mitigation contractors.

MYTH: Radon affects only certain kinds of homes. **FACT:** House construction can affect radon levels. However, radon can be a problem in homes of all types: old homes, new homes, drafty homes, insulated homes, homes with basements, and homes without basements. Local geology, construction materials, and how the home was built are among the factors that can affect radon levels in homes.

MYTH: Radon is only a problem in certain parts of the country. **FACT:** High radon levels have been found in every state. Radon problems do vary from area to area, but the only way to know your radon level is to test.

MYTH: A neighbor's test result is a good indication of whether your home has a problem. **FACT:** It's not. Radon levels can vary greatly from home to home. The only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test it.

MYTH: Everyone should test their water for radon. **FACT:** Although radon gets into some homes through water, it is important to first test the air in the home for radon. If your water comes from a public water supply that uses ground water, call your water supplier. If high radon levels are found and the home has a private well, call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 800-426-4791 for information on testing your water.

MYTH: It's difficult to sell homes where radon problems have been discovered. **FACT:** Where radon problems have been fixed, home sales have not been blocked or frustrated. The added protection is sometimes a good selling point.

MYTH: I've lived in my home for so long, it doesn't make sense to take action now. **FACT:** You will reduce your risk of lung cancer when you reduce radon levels, even if you've lived with a radon problem for a long time.

MYTH: Short-term tests can't be used for making a decision about whether to fix your home. **FACT:** A short-term test, followed by a second short-term test or a long term test can be used to decide whether to fix your home. However, the closer the average of your two short-term tests is to 4 pCi/L, the less certain you can be about whether your year-round average is above or below that level. Keep in mind that radon levels below 4 pCi/L still pose some risk. Radon levels can be reduced in most homes to 2 pCi/L or below.